

is markedly different from that of Pamir, as can even be observed from Scully's incomplete observations. He speaks of only four mammals; and two of them were not observed in Turkestan, viz. a wild sheep peculiar to Tibet and West China (*Ovis nahoor*), and an antelope (*Kemas hodgsoni*)*. The other two mammals of Western Tibet probably also range into the Pamir; they are a marmot (*Arctomys*, sp.) and a hare (*Lepus*, sp.) with a bluish grey rump.

V.—Notes on the earliest available Scientific Name for the Woodchat Shrike. By HOWARD SAUNDERS, F.Z.S.

MR. SEEBOHM and I have had occasion to examine the synonymy of the Woodchat Shrike, with the following result:—

The name most frequently employed until late years is *Lanius rufus*, Brisson (Orn. ii. p. 147); but Brisson's name, although correctly applied, antedates the ornithological era 1766, and is therefore not available. *Lanius rufus*, Linn. Syst. Nat. i. p. 137 (1766), is avowedly based upon *Lanius madagascarensis rufus*, Briss. Orn. ii. p. 178, a Madagascar bird; so that is out of the question. On turning to Mr. H. E. Dresser's 'Birds of Europe' for information, the first name on the list (iii. p. 147) is *Lanius auriculatus*, "Müll. Syst. Nat. Suppl. p. 71 (1766)" [sic]. These citations for title and date, given by Messrs. Sharpe and Dresser (for they were partners in this article), are both erroneous: the former should be "Müller, Natursyst [ems] Suppl. p. 71;" and the proper date is 1776. But the godfather of this name appears to be Professor Newton, who, in his 4th edition of Yarrell's Brit. Birds, i. p. 215, employs the name *L. auriculatus*, P. L. S. Müller, giving, it is almost needless to say, the correct reference. The question, however, is whether the bird so named by Müller is the Woodchat?

An examination of the second volume of Müller's 'Natursystem' shows that he only distinguished two species of

* Perhaps this is the straight-horned Ras mentioned by Wood on the authority of the inhabitants as occurring in the Pamir.

European Shrikes, which he named *L. excubitor* and *L. collurio*, the adult male of the latter being, at most, imperfectly known to him. In the Supplement, p. 71 (1776), he named a third, "Die schwarzöhrige" (the Blackeared), *Lanius auriculatus*; and the following is an exact translation of his description:—

"The name is given because this bird has a long black spot behind the eye on each side, which gives it the appearance of having black ears. For the rest the back is whitish grey.

"It is the *Piegrèche rousse* of Buffon; for a certain variety has a red breast. Habitat Europe."

Now by no elasticity of description can the back of the Woodchat be termed grey. The shoulders are chestnut, like the nape and crown; the mantle is black; and the only grey to be discovered is on quite the lower part, or rump. The black ear-patch is found in the adult males of all the European species; so that portion of Müller's diagnosis is useless. He goes on to identify his *L. auriculatus* with the *Pie-grièche rousse* of Buffon. On turning to the 'Planches Enluminées,' plate 9, fig. 2 is a perfectly recognizable representation of a male Woodchat, in which the back, right down to the upper tail-coverts, is entirely black, and the breast is buff-white. On pl. 31, fig. 1, which is in the background, is called *Pie-grièche rousse de France, femelle*, but is really the female of *L. collurio*. On the same plate, in the foreground, although numbered 2, is a representation of the adult male *L. collurio*, in which the back, with the exception of the mantle, really is grey. There is, however, no proof that Müller identified his bird with Buffon's from either of these plates, or even that he ever saw them; nor does Buffon's description make matters at all clear. My impression is, that by *L. auriculatus* Müller meant *L. minor*, which has the grey back, the black ear-patch, and the rosy breast; but all I maintain is, that there is no good reason for applying this name to the Woodchat, and that the sooner it is altogether discarded the better.

Next in order amongst the synonyms comes *Lanius*

pomeranus, Sparrman, Mus. Carls. fasc. i. no. 1, pl. (1786), an excellent description and plate of an adult Woodchat. By early authors, and by compilers like Degland and Gerbe, Gmelin is frequently quoted as the author of this name; and it is his No 33, Syst. Nat. i. p. 302 (1788); but he avowedly took it from Sparrman. So, unless some one can discover an earlier and valid title, it seems to me that the name of the Woodchat must stand as *Lanius pomeranus*.

Just for curiosity, let us look a little further and see what others have done. *Lanius rufus* γ , Gm. S. N. i. p. 301, is a supposed variety γ of his *L. collurio*, No. 12. *Lanius rutilus*, Latham, Ind. Orn. i. p. 70 (1790), is recognizable as the Woodchat, but anticipated four years by *L. pomeranus*. Bechstein, in his Vög. Deutschl., 1st ed., i. p. 387, taf. 15 (1791), calls the Woodchat *L. collurio*; but in the 2nd ed. ii. p. 1327, taf. 15. fig. 1 (1805), he names it *L. ruficeps*, Retzius, Fauna Suecica, p. 89 (1800). On referring to that page, Retzius appears to have given it no such name, but called it *L. rufus*. But what a waste of time it is to dig up these musty old authors, who cannot even quote their authorities correctly, and to try to make out their imperfect descriptions, so as to get a year or two nearer to the ornithological era 1766. The earliest unimpeachable description and figure of the Woodchat is that of *Lanius pomeranus*, Sparrman; and by the existing rules we must accept it, and get used to it as soon as possible. Those who refuse to do this, and adopt names merely because they have been sanctioned by the number or the authoritative weight of employers, will certainly go further and probably fare worse.

VI.—On a Collection of Birds from Borneo.

By FRANCIS NICHOLSON, F.Z.S.

MR. E. G. LEMPRIERE, who is now collecting in Borneo, has forwarded to England a series of beautifully prepared skins, on which I have written a few notes.

The birds are from three localities, and include a number